



A New Year, A New Parent

Five life-changing resolutions for parents.
by Leslie Leyland Field

January 2016

The arrival of another year brings a fresh opportunity for parents to establish new habits to strengthen their families. Here are five resolutions that get to the heart of what parents should focus on for 2016.

Redefine success. Americans are now working more hours than any other industrialized country. Regardless of your job or the economy, it's key to remember that what our children need most from us is not a bigger house, a newer car or the latest electronic gadget, but whatever time we can give and a genuine, caring relationship. Your children measure your success as a parent not by what you buy, but by your love and commitment to them.

TIP: Show your love tangibly by prioritizing family dinners at least four times a week. Schedule a family activity for a few hours each week, or at least once a month. Within the parameters you set, let kids take turns choosing the activity, such as going bowling, playing mini-golf or cooking brunch.

Add outdoor adventure. Most families follow a school-and-work schedule that hinders spontaneous trips and outdoor adventures. And the prevalent concern for protection has led many people to label the current generation of parents and their kids as anxious and averse to outdoor play. However, over scheduling and over sheltering can cripple children with fear and limit their experiences. Plus, technology isn't helping much in enticing kids to explore the great outdoors. Give your kids challenges and adventures to stretch their abilities and develop self-confidence.

TIP: Break up your family's routine. Go on a weekend camping trip, climb a mountain, raft down a river, learn to surf. Build into your family's schedule at least one outdoor adventure every month.

Trust what is real about parenting, not what you feel about parenting. Nothing is closer to our emotions than parenting. Recognize that our emotions and our sense of fulfillment will fluctuate from day-to-day. On a good day, you'd proudly wear a Parent of the Year tiara. On a bad day, you'd rather be raising orchids than kids. But the good news is that the value of parenting is not determined by how we feel about it. What matters is what's true and real. Our children are given to us as gifts and responsibilities. They are of inestimable value. We get to make a difference in the world by making a difference in them.

Special points of Interest

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- ✦ Classroom updates
- ✦ Top Children's Books of 2015

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Please check your student folder every day, there you will find important information! Also, make sure your child always has a change of clothes and pull-ups. Thank You!

Pixie Butterflies

In December, the Pixies explored the different holidays celebrated around the world. We painted with dreidels, made menorahs, decorated ornaments, and even got to see what snow feels like! January will be filled with even more fun activities. We will explore different shapes and continue to learn to be a Super Friend by sharing and using our words.



-Ms. Stacey & Ms. Stephanie

Julia & Buttcreup Butterflies



Happy New Year and welcome back! We are so excited to get started on the second half of the school year. This month we will continue to review our letters of the week by practicing phonetic sounds, writing, and letter recognition. As we start 2016 we will begin focusing on our Kindergarten Readiness skills. Practicing compound words and sight words are all skills that help to prepare your child for success once they enter elementary school.

-Ms. Paige & Ms. Vicky

Monarch Butterflies

Wow! What an exciting holiday program! I am so proud of the Monarch students and their performance of Feliz Navidad! This month we will focus on expressing ourselves through art, theatre, and music. We will play different musical instruments and strengthen our fine motor skills by using paint brushes. Help expand your child's creative expression at home by pretending to be on a safari or piloting a "couch" rocket ship to the moon!

-Ms. Gillian and Ms. Amy



Elf Butterflies



As we make our way into the New Year we look forward to expanding upon the lessons we have already learned while continuing the introduction of new ones. Sensory based activities are popular with our class right now and we are excited to create some "snow" together for our classroom. Additionally, we plan on solidifying our knowledge of letters and letter sounds through music and movement activities. Please be mindful of the continually changing weather when you bring back clothes for your child's cubby. We are excited to enter the new year ready to learn!

-Ms. Taylor & Ms. Sophia

Blue Wave Butterflies



Happy New Year! To start off this year we will spend a few weeks in review of the letters we've learned. Near the end of January, we will begin letter blends and new and more challenging letter sounds. We will also be focusing on writing our first and last names. As always, there will be a ton of science activities infused into our math and language arts activities. Looking forward to a great 2016 in the Blue Wave classroom!

Ms. Rhiannon

Best Children's Books of 2015

1) Pat-a-Cake

by Mary Brigid Barrett, illustrated by LeUyen Pham

2) Alone Together

written and illustrated by Suzanne Bloom

3) Some Bugs

by Angela DiTerlizzi, illustrated by Brendan Wenzel

4) Max and the Won't Go to Bed Show

by Mark Sperring, illustrated by Sarah Warburton

5) Underpants Dance

by Marlena Zapf, illustrated by Lynne Avril

6) Hopper and Wilson Fetch a Star

written and illustrated by Maria van Lieshout

7) The Pigeon Needs a Bath!

written and illustrated by Mo Willems

8) Love You More

by Susan Musgrave, illustrated by Esperanca Melo

9) Green Is a Chile Pepper: A Book of Colors

by Roseanne Greenfield Thong, illustrated by John Parra

10) The Storm Whale

written and illustrated by Benji Davies

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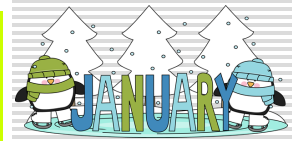
TIP: Help your kids set long-term goals, such as attending college, taking a special trip, making the football team, buying a first car. Start a savings program (or a healthy fitness program) with your children and stick to it. Keep in mind that it's easier to abstain from immediate gratification when it threatens a highly desired goal.

Resist parenting formulas. Some parenting programs and formulas, even if they sell millions of books, promise to make the task of raising kids easy and convenient. But most of us didn't have children for convenience. Resist the temptation to follow someone else's one-size-fits-all formula. Remember why you had children in the first place. Celebrate the uniqueness of each child, and the chaotic, thrilling ride of parenting.

TIP: Be open to new information. And always measure others' parenting advice (including this article) with what you know about your children. No one knows your kids or has as much invested in their future as you do.

Teach toward the long-term good. In our consumer culture, many people lose the ability to distinguish between need and want. Our kids are especially targeted by the most creative minds in advertising to crave and buy the newest and coolest things. Parents, too, can be convinced to give their kids what they want, contributing to Internet and gaming addictions, childhood obesity and other ills. One of our primary jobs as parents is to model our own distinction between immediate gratification and the long-term good, and to equip our children to do the same.

TIP: Acknowledge your feelings of frustration when challenges arise. However, avoid focusing on guilt and negativity— either toward you or your child. Be mindful that your children are here to contribute to the world in a meaningful way. Along the way, they are prone to mess up or cause a conflict in learning how to be the best people they are destined to become.



Thursday
December 31
WPDN CLOSED

Friday
January 1
WPDN CLOSED

Parent Training
Wednesday
January 6
6:00 pm

Friday
January 15
Super Supper
Chicken & Dumplings
w/ tossed salad

Monday
January 18
WPDN CLOSED

Friday
January 29
Super Supper
Quiche w/ fruit

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Mission:

The Winter Park Day Nursery provides a secure, nurturing and educational environment that is affordable and supports family diversity.

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